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wherein the second panel section is mounted such that said overlap region of the first panel section overlies the covered region of the second panel and the top edge of the covered region of the second panel abuts the bottom edge of the first panel at an interface orthogonal to the substrates.

2. The method of claim 1, comprising:

mounting each panel section to the building surface so that a rear surface of the foam contacts the building surface.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein said step of mounting each panel section includes: positioning the section of siding, shingle or shake so that a major surface of the foam contacts the building surface and acts as a spacer to position the region of the panel section of siding, shingle or shake at a non-zero distance from the building surface.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein for each panel section, the foam covers a rear surface of the siding, shingle or shake, except in said overlap region where the panel section of siding, shingle or shake is to overlap a neighboring section of siding, shingle or shake, and said step of mounting each panel section includes positioning the section panel of siding, shingle or shake so that a bottom edge of the foam rests on a top edge of an adjacent section of siding, shingle or shake.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein the foam is made of polypropylene or polyethylene.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein the foam is in the form of a sheet and an adhesive bonds the foam to each substrate.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein the foam is bonded to each substrate without an adhesive there between.

8. The method of claim 7, wherein the foam is attached to each substrate using staples, flanges or prongs.

9. The method of claim 7, wherein the foam is attached to each substrate by fusion or forming the foam on the substrate, or pouring the foam onto the substrate, and allowing the foam to solidify.

10. The method of claim 1, wherein each panel section comprises:

a plurality of grooves in a surface of the closed cell foam.

11. The method of claim 10, wherein each substrate is shaped as a section of siding, a shake, a soffit, roofing tile or shingle, a panel, or a trim piece.

12. The method of claim 10 wherein the grooves are oriented so that they have a direction with a vertical component when the siding, shake, soffit, roofing tile or shingle, panel, or trim piece is installed.

13. The method of claim 12, wherein the grooves are located on the major surface of the foam facing away from the substrates.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein the grooves are oriented in a direction that is not parallel or perpendicular to side edges of the substrate, the foam further comprises a first additional groove located along a vertical side edge of the substrate, the first additional groove connected to the plurality of grooves.

15. The method of claim 14, the foam further comprises a second additional groove located along a horizontal side edge of the substrate, the second additional groove connected to the plurality of grooves.

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16. The method of claim 12, wherein the foam comprises polyurethane.

17. The method of claim 1, wherein said foam being disposed behind said substrate has an edge adapted to engage an edge on another substrate of an adjacent panel section on the building surface.

18. The method of claim 1, wherein an air space is formed between the building surface and the bottom edge of the foam of the first panel section.

19. A method of mounting a first panel section and a second panel section of siding, shingle or shake for mounting to a building surface, wherein the method comprises:

providing or obtaining the first panel section and the second panel section of siding, shingle or shake, wherein each of the first and second panel sections comprises:

(i) a plurality of substrates each containing fibers in a cement matrix and including a major surface, and

(ii) a single porous, closed cell foam covering and bonding to a portion of the major surface of the substrates to form a covered region, the plurality of substrates being separated apart along the foam by slots, the foam being uncovered and exposed at the slots, the covered region comprising a top edge and a bottom edge, and an overlap region of said substrates, the overlap region being uncovered by said foam, said foam having closed cell polymer beads, wherein the beads are fused to one another at their tangent points and provide interstices between the beads;

mounting each of said first and second panel sections to the building surface with said foam being disposed in front of said substrates, which provides moisture drainage in front of said substrates by way of the interstices between the beads, such that the substrates are positioned directly against the building surface and the foam faces away from the building surface; and

wherein the second panel section is mounted such that said overlap region of the first panel section overlies the covered region of the second panel and the top edge of the covered region of the second panel abuts the bottom edge of the first panel at an interface orthogonal to the substrates.

20. The method of claim 19, wherein said step of mounting each panel section includes:

positioning the section panel of siding, shingle or shake so that a major surface of the foam faces away from the building surface and acts as a spacer to position a bottom portion of an adjacent panel section of siding, shingle or shake at a non-zero distance from the building surface.

21. The method of claim 20, wherein the substrate is positioned between the building and the foam, so that the foam does not contact the building.

22. The method of claim 21, further comprising mounting a starter piece to the building to orient the first panel section that is a bottom panel section in a plurality of panel sections attached to the building.

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